



SPAWN

HINE

HABERLIN

MC FARLANE

THE BEST OF TIMES



ISSUE 181 DIGITAL EDITION

SPAWN.COM

HABERLIN:



TODD MCFARLANE AND
IMAGE COMICS PRESENT

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Previously in Spawn:

Al Simmons was a hit man for the US government until his C.O. Jason Wynn, betrayed him and a mysterious assassin ended Al's life. At the moment of death, Al was offered a deal by the demon Malebolgia and returned to Earth as Spawn, a creature with supernatural powers born in Hell.

As Armageddon consumed the world, Spawn turned against his masters, destroying all life on Earth. While God and Satan continue their endless conflict in a parallel universe, Spawn has re-created the world and resurrected the human race in what has become known as the White Light. The portals to Heaven and Hell are closed, leaving humanity free from the influence of angels and demons. Or so he believed...

After a reunion with his brother, Richard, Al's long-buried memories are beginning to resurface. It seems that the mysterious Mammon has been manipulating Al Simmons since he was a child. When he returns to his parents' home, Al's father tells him that Mammon's influence stretches back even further. He gives Al the journal of his great grandfather, Henry Simmons, a journal that carries a dire warning for future generations. The Simmons bloodline tainted and Al's mother has been in league with Mammon, the man she knew as Malefick, since before his birth, marrying Al's father for the sole purpose of breeding this generation's Hellspawn.

As Mammon draws the threads of his plot together, Spawn has returned with the Wiccan, Nyx to his retreat in the Alleys. Here he is attacked by a Vrykolakas, ancient precursor of the Vampire. The creature has been sent by the mysterious cloaked companion of Mammon. When the creature bites Spawn, it infects him with a fever that splits him in two. Inside his tortured mind, Al battles with his own costume and loses. Now, with the symbiotic costume dominant, Spawn has a new purpose – to finally lay his humanity to rest by killing Wanda.

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why?

WHY DO YOU HAVE TO KILL MY MOM--?



I HAVE TO, BECAUSE IT'S TELLING ME--



CAN'T YOU HEAR IT?!

HEAR WHAT?



THIS!



SHE HAD SEEN ALL
THIS BLOOD BEFORE--
IN HER 'VISIONS.'

RIVERS OF IT. LAKES
OF IT. A WHOLE WORLD
DROWNED IN BLOOD.

YET THE ONLY ONE--THE
ONLY THING--WILLING TO
STOP IT WAS SPAWN. SO HE
SAVED THEM. EVERY LAST
ONE OF THEM. DESPITE
THEIR HATRED OF HIM
AND FOR ONE ANOTHER.

HE SAVED THEM--
THE ENTIRE
HUMAN RACE.

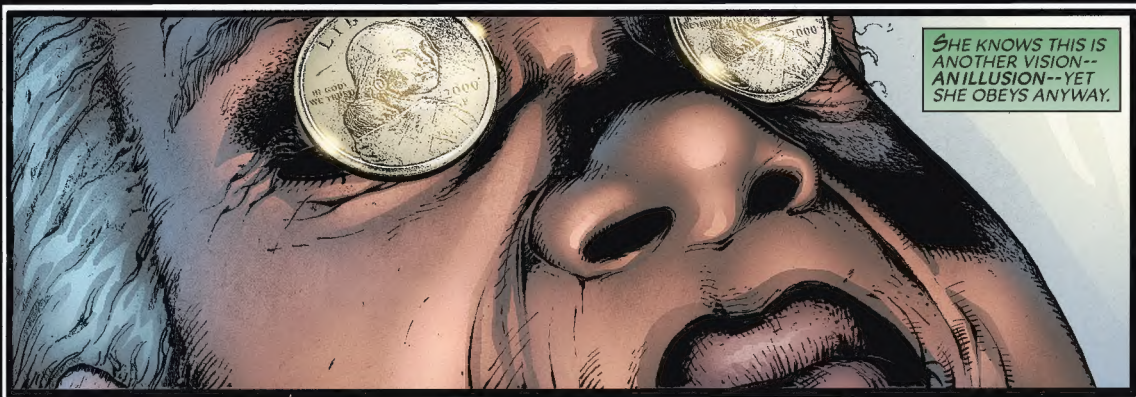
NOW THIS LITTLE
GIRL'S LAST
THOUGHT IS...

"GOD
HAVE
MERCY
ON US
ALL."



THE COLD PRESENCE OF ANOTHER. AND THOUGH HER ROOM IS WARM, CYAN IS ABLE TO SEE HER OWN BREATH.

AS SHE TURNS, SHE ALREADY KNOWS WHAT WILL BE THERE.



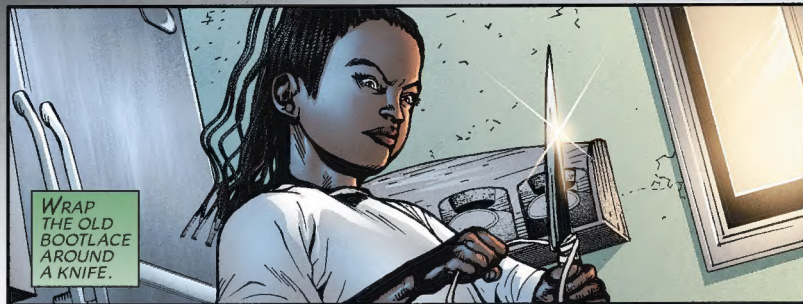


Closer...
child.

Come
closer.

I have
something
to tell
you...

WHISPERED
INSTRUCTIONS
ARE GIVEN.

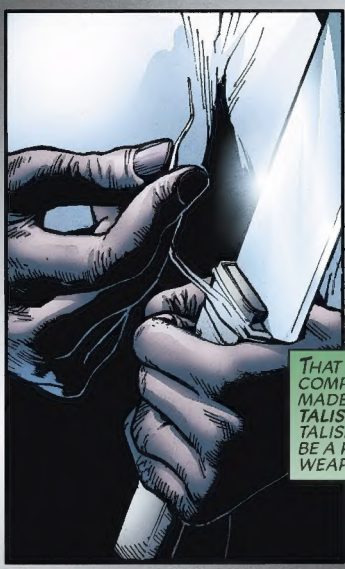


WRAP
THE OLD
BOOTLACE
AROUND
A KNIFE.



THE LACE IS THE LINK TO
SPAWN--ONCE USED TO
STITCH HIS WOUNDS.*

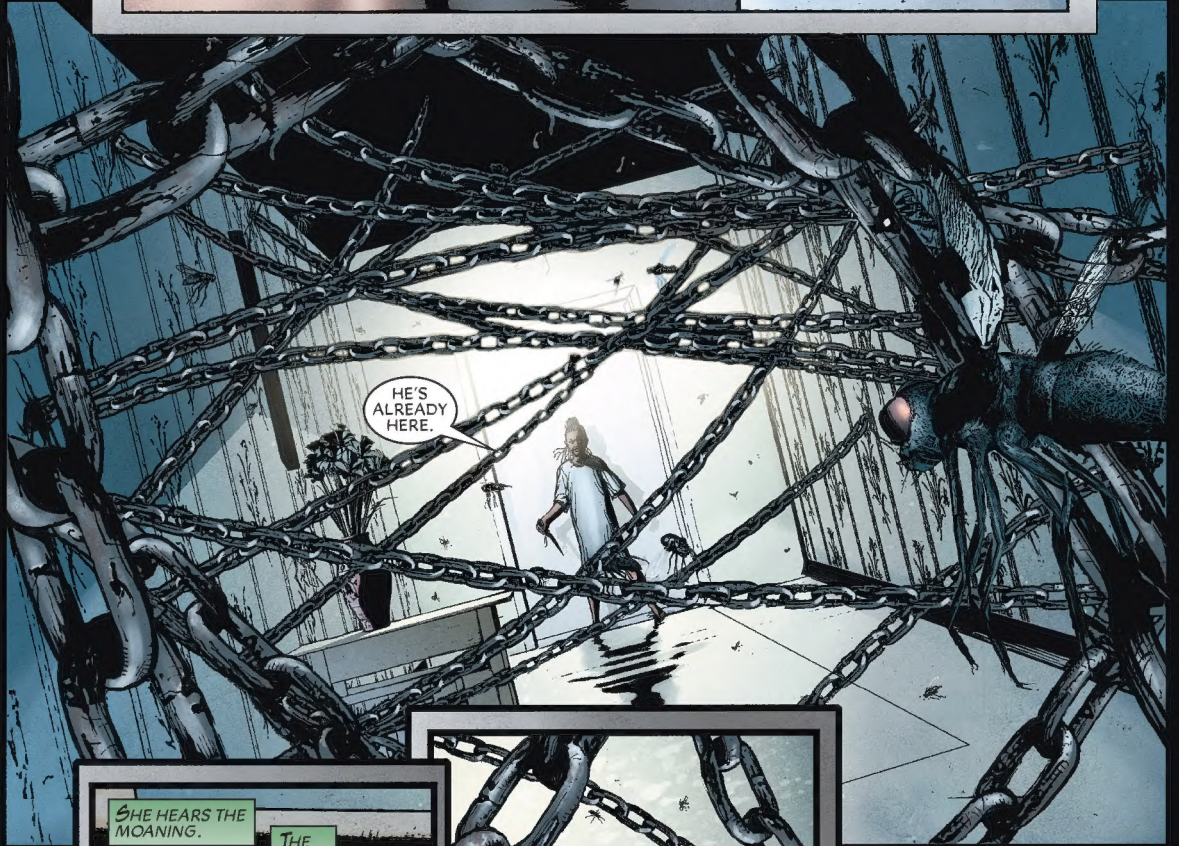
*SEE ISSUE 21.



THAT ACT OF
COMPASSION
MADE THE LACE A
TALISMAN AND A
TALISMAN CAN
BE A POWERFUL
WEAPON.



SHE TELLS
HERSELF SHE
CAN DO THIS.



HE'S
ALREADY
HERE.

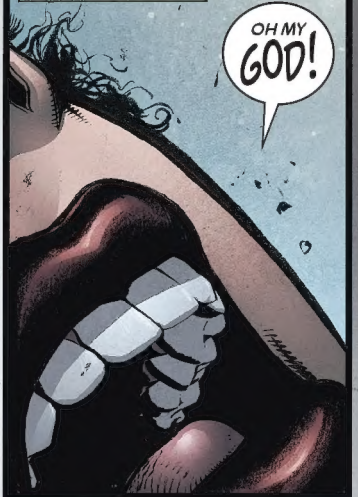
SHE HEARS THE
MOANING.

THE
CRIES.



HURRY, CYAN--YOUR
MOTHER NEEDS YOU.

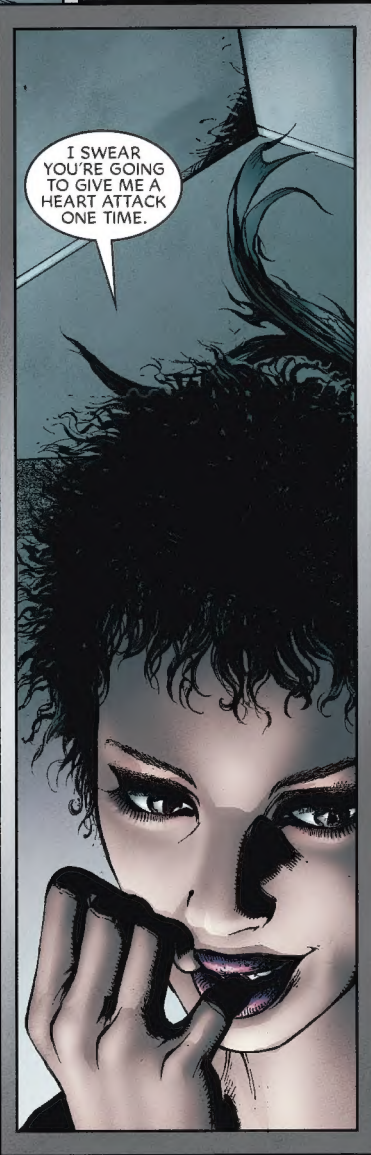
OH MY
GOD!





oh
my
god.

THAT WAS--
UNBELIEVABLE.



I SWEAR
YOU'RE GOING
TO GIVE ME A
HEART ATTACK
ONE TIME.

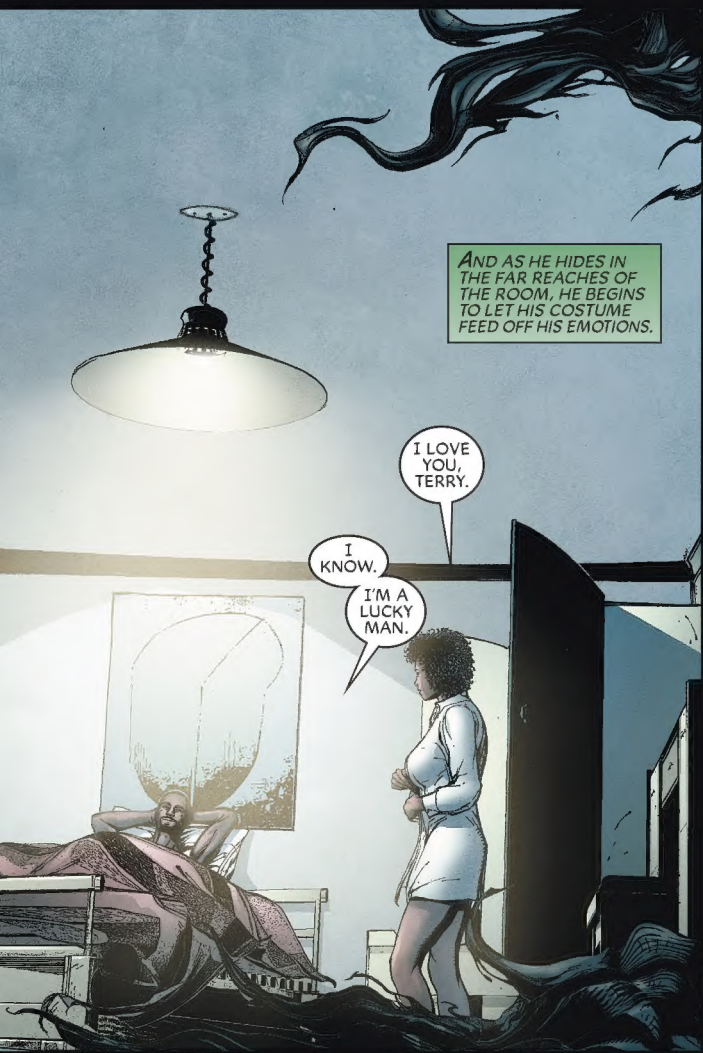


HE CANNOT MOVE.


HAVING BEEN
IN THE ROOM
FOR ALL OF IT,
A WITNESS TO
EVERY MOVE
HER BODY AND
MOUTH WERE
MAKING.



HE'D THOUGHT THOSE
INTENSE CRIES OF PLEASURE
WERE ONLY FOR HIM.



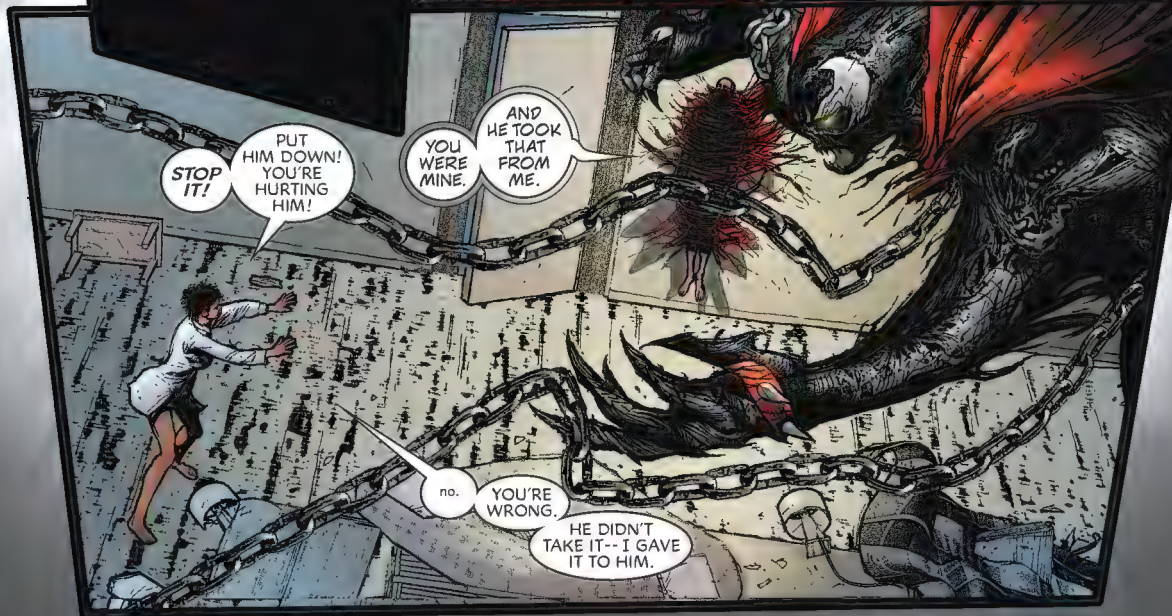




...FILLING ITS
NEED TO TOUCH
HATRED.

IN RETURN THE LIVING
TISSUE FEEDS SPAWN
WITH MYRIAD DIZZYING
THOUGHTS AND IMAGES.

YOU'RE
NOTHING BUT A
WHORE!







GRANNY SAID TO GIVE YOU A MESSAGE.



SHE SAID YOU NEED TO TAKE MY MOM BACK TO 'THE BEST OF TIMES'.



THE BEST OF TIMES.*

*SEE ISSUE 16



YES. SHE SAID YOU'LL KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS.



PLEASE...

DON'T HURT MY FAMILY. I'LL DO WHATEVER YOU WANT.

JUST LEAVE THEM ALONE.





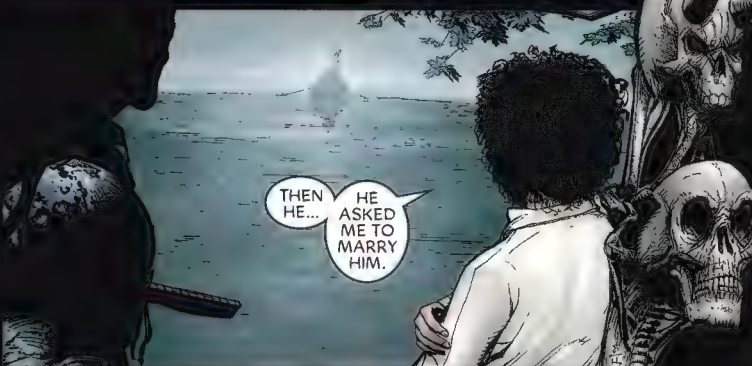
THIS
PLACE.

DO YOU
REMEMBER
IT?



HE
BROUGHT
ME HERE
ONCE.

HE RENTED
A SMALL BOAT.
TOOK US OUT TO
THE MIDDLE OF
THE LAKE.

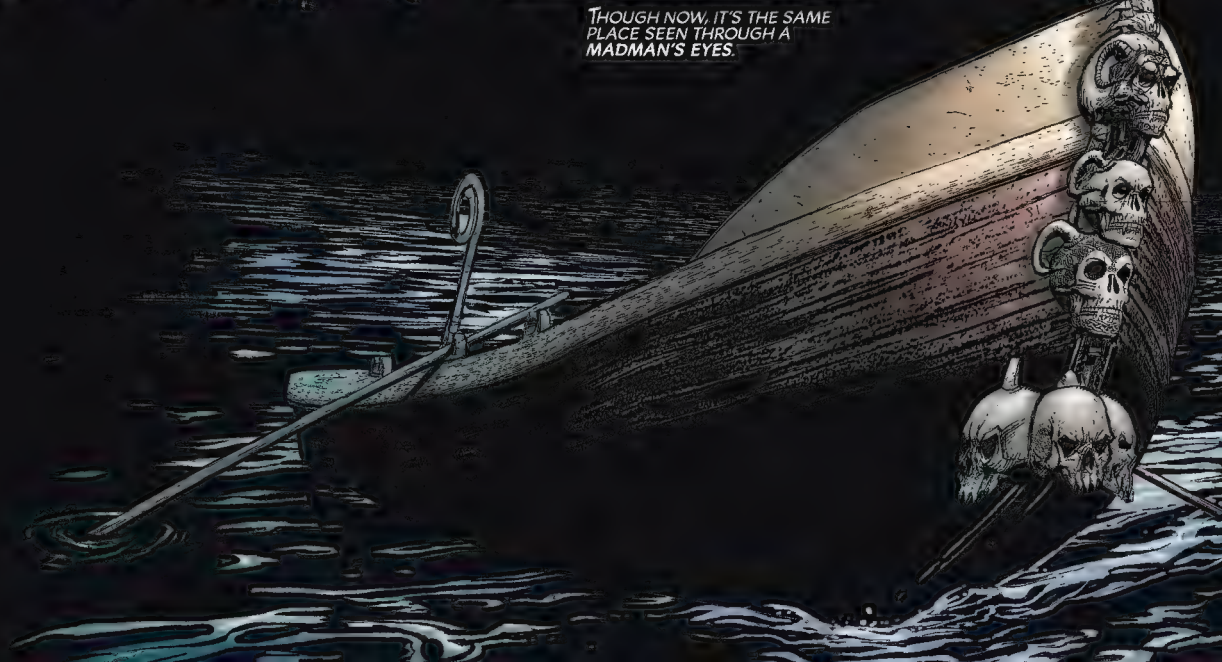


THEN
HE...

HE
ASKED
ME TO
MARRY
HIM.

SHE REMEMBERS THAT DAY WITH PERFECT CLARITY. THE LAKE WAS LIKE A MIRROR, THE SUN WARM ON HER FACE, NEARBY THEY COULD HEAR THE SOUND OF CHILDREN'S LAUGHTER.

THOUGH NOW, IT'S THE SAME PLACE SEEN THROUGH A MADMAN'S EYES.



THAT
REALLY WAS THE
BEST OF OUR
TIMES.

NOW WHAT?
YOU'RE GOING TO
KILL ME?

I DON'T HAVE A
CHOICE. I NEED TO BE
FREE OF YOU.



FREE....!
FROM
ME?!

WHAT
ABOUT ME
BEING FREE
OF YOU!

ALL I DID WAS
TRY AND CARRY ON--TO
TRY AND GET PAST THE PAIN
OF MY HUSBAND'S DEATH.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT
THAT'S LIKE...?

TO HAVE
SOMEONE
LEAVE YOU AND
BREAK YOUR
HEART AT THE
SAME TIME?

YOU WANT
TO BE FREE OF
ME? THEN
FORGET ME.
FORGET I EVER
EXISTED!

I
CAN'T.
I'VE
ALREADY
TRIED. I KEEP
COMING BACK
TO WHAT I DID
TO YOU.

TO US.

AND
KILLING ME
RIDS YOU
OF THAT
GUILT?

NO.

KILLING YOU
STOPS ME FROM
THINKING I WAS
EVER HUMAN TO
BEGIN WITH.





AND
WHAT IF I
FORGIVE
YOU...

...OF YOUR
SIN OF KILLING
OUR UNBORN
CHILD.



THEN
SAY
IT.



I'M
SORRY

I CAN'T.



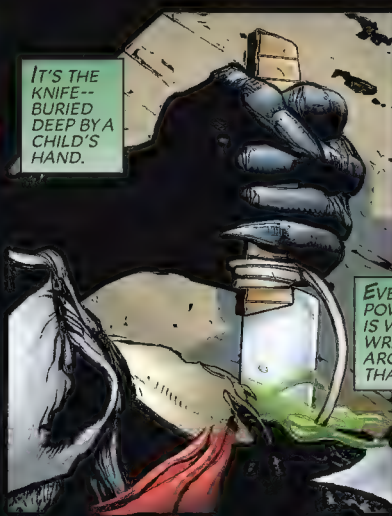
I CAN'T
FORGIVE YOU
FOR THAT.

BUT IF MY
HUSBAND IS
SOMEWHERE
INSIDE YOU...TELL
HIM THAT I
LOVED HIM.

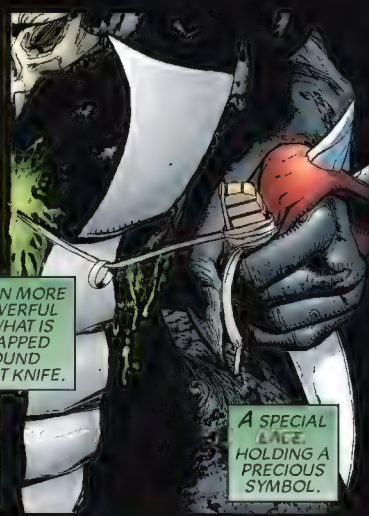
I STILL
DO.



AS HE CONTEMPLATES HIS NEXT MOVE, A SHARP PAIN CUTS THROUGH THE CORE OF HIS BODY.



IT'S THE KNIFE-- BURIED DEEP BY A CHILD'S HAND.

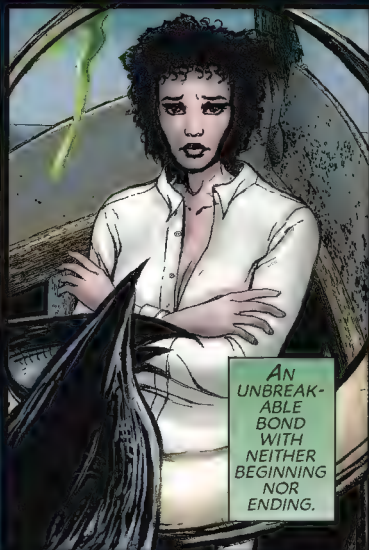
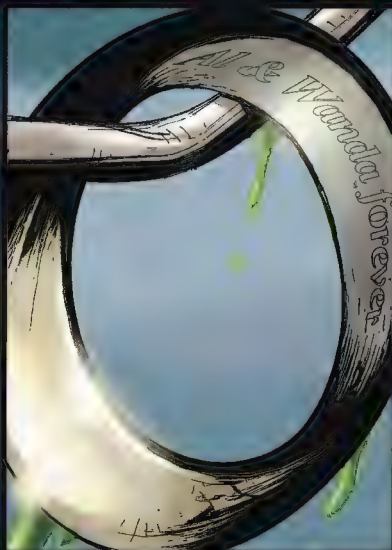


EVEN MORE POWERFUL IS WHAT IS WRAPPED AROUND THAT KNIFE.

A SPECIAL LACE, HOLDING A PRECIOUS SYMBOL.



A SYMBOL OF THAT WHICH 'NO MAN MAY PUT ASUNDER.'



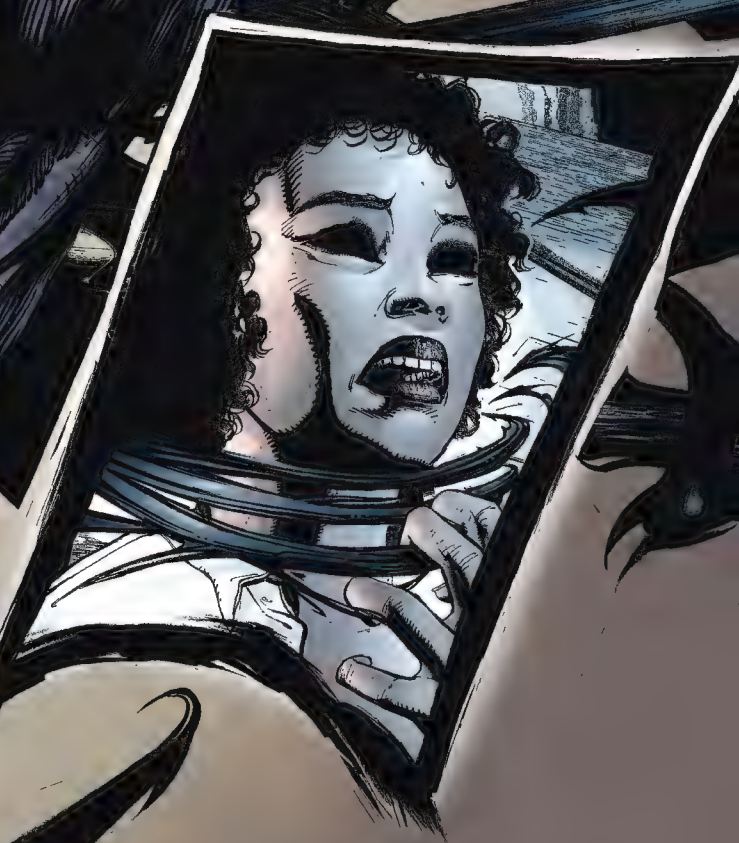
AN UNBREAKABLE BOND WITH NEITHER BEGINNING NOR ENDING.



WANDA...



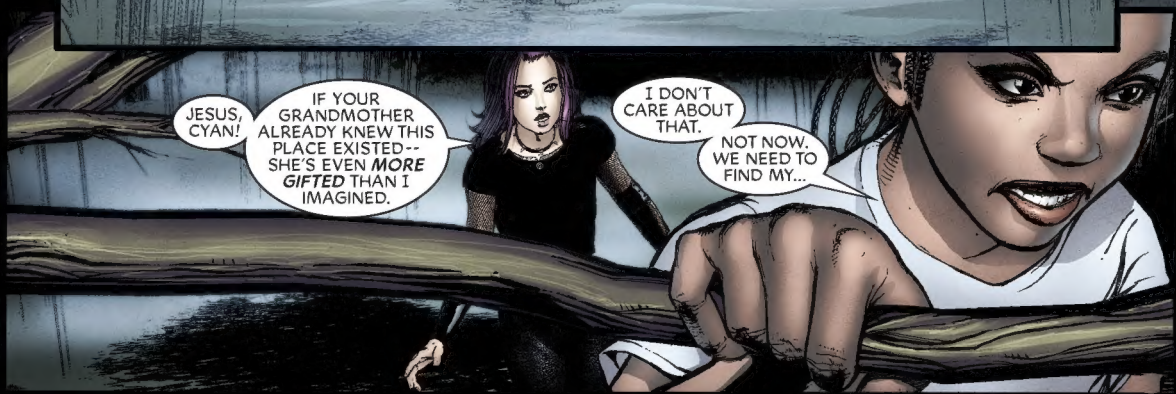
**FORGIVE
ME!**





THIS WAY!
HURRY.

MY MOM--
I CAN FEEL HER--
SHE'S STILL
ALIVE!

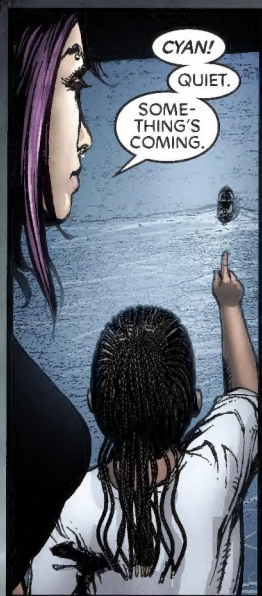


JESUS,
CYAN!

IF YOUR
GRANDMOTHER
ALREADY KNEW THIS
PLACE EXISTED--
SHE'S EVEN *MORE*
GIFTED THAN I
IMAGINED.

I DON'T
CARE ABOUT
THAT.

NOT NOW.
WE NEED TO
FIND MY...



CYAN!

QUIET.

SOME-
THING'S
COMING.





MOM!

COME.

SHE NEEDS
YOU AND YOUR
STRENGTH.



YOU
OKAY,
MOM?

SWEETIE...



YOUR
DAUGHTER
FOUND ME--
SOMEHOW--I
DON'T KNOW
HOW SHE
DID IT.

BUT IT
APPEARS
I'M NOT
THE ONLY
WITCH
AROUND
HERE.

WHAT
ABOUT
YOU?

HOW'RE
YOU
FEELING,
AL?

SOMETHING
HAPPENED
OUT
THERE. THE
COSTUME...

IT WAS
CONTROLLING
ME--THEN
IT JUST LEFT
ME.

DISAPPEARED
INTO THE
LAKE.



I DIDN'T
THINK IT WAS
POSSIBLE.

BUT I
THINK I'M
FREE OF
IT.



TO BE CONTINUED





Tyrant
Lizard
King

EMPIRE